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## U.S.: Iran has chemical weapons threatening Gulf

By Suzanne M. Schaefer  
Special to Press Writer

DOHA, Qatar — Iran has installed chemical weapons along with 6,000 troops near the mouth of the Persian Gulf in a military buildup capable of tipping the flow of oil in the region, defense Secretary William Perry said Wednesday.

"We really do not know why Iran could choose to deploy chemical weapons there, but we consider it to be a very negative factor," Mr. Perry told reporters aboard the USS McClusky. The Navy frigate was making a port call at Abu Dhabi, largest of the seven United Arab Emirates.

He said it was important for the Gulf Arab states to fully understand the nature of the threat it poses. Meanwhile U.N. officials are questioning Iraq's account of its biological weapons program after discovering it hasn't accounted for 3 tons of material that could be used to cultivate germs, an official said Wednesday.

The chief U.N. weapons monitor, Telford Ekeus, left for Iraq on Wednesday to press Baghdad for details of its past biological programs, spokesman Tim Trevan. He is expected to arrive in Baghdad Friday.

Mr. Perry, on a six-day Gulf tour, has been urging Arab allies to

upgrade their defenses and improve ties with the U.S. military in the face of military buildups by both Iraq and Iran. He arrived in Qatar late Wednesday to discuss the storage of supplies for a U.S. armored brigade, one of three Washington wants to stockpile in the region.

The defense secretary was warned repeatedly in recent days of Iran's weapons buildup near the mouth of the Persian Gulf, he had not previously mentioned chemical weapons. Mr. Perry said he could not discuss the type of chemical weapons Iran has deployed or their delivery system.

Mr. Perry said the arsenal also includes Chinese-made Silkworm anti-ship and Hawk anti-air missiles, as well as about 6,000 troops.

The defense secretary said the chemical weapons give Tehran the capability to harass shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, through which half of the world's oil is transported. The chemical weapons also could be used to defend islands in the strait that are claimed by both Iran and the United Arab Emirates, Mr. Perry said.

While Mr. Perry did not say exactly where the troops or chemical weapons were located, the Pentagon has said the Iranians have increased defenses on one of the disputed islands called Abu Musa.



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### ANNOUNCES A MEETING AND INVITES PUBLIC COMMENT

On The Explanation of Significant Differences  
For The New Bedford Harbor Superfund Site  
in New Bedford, Massachusetts

Consistent with Section 117 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), EPA has developed an Explanation of Significant Differences (ESD) document for public comment. The document explains the proposed use of the Sawyer Street Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) to store untreated Hot Spot sediments for 4-5 years while other treatment options are evaluated and implemented. This proposed interim storage differs from the original cleanup plan signed in April 1990, which called for short term storage in the CDF as part of an incineration based remedy.

The EPA and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP) in conjunction with the Forum will hold a public meeting on March 28, 1995 at the Greater New Bedford Vocational Technical High School to discuss the proposed change and hear citizens' comments. The Forum meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. and the ESD discussion will begin at 7:00 p.m. Public comments on the proposed onsite storage of Hot Spot sediments will be accepted from March 29 through May 1, 1995.

The original cleanup plan called for dredging the PCB Hot Spot sediments, dewatering, and incineration of the sediments. During that process, untreated sediment would have been stored for a short period of time in an onsite, double-lined lagoon (Confined Disposal Facility). However, due to local opposition to incineration, a forum of local and state officials, citizen groups, and state and federal agencies was formed to discuss all the concerns. Through the forum a consensus was reached to suspend incineration plans and instead identify and test alternative methods of treating the sediments. Meanwhile, EPA through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has continued dredging of the Hot Spot sediments, and with extensive citizen involvement has begun the contractual process for performing treatability studies. While treatment alternatives are being evaluated, the proposal is to continue storing the sediment onsite. Onsite treatability pilot studies are expected to occur late this fall.

A copy of the ESD as well as other information on the New Bedford Harbor Site will be available for public review at the meeting and will be placed in the Administrative Record File, maintained at the following locations:

New Bedford Public Library  
613 Pleasant Street  
New Bedford, Massachusetts  
(508) 991-6280/6275

EPA Region I Records Ctr.  
90 Canal Street  
Boston, Massachusetts  
(617) 573-5729

Comments or questions concerning the ESD should be post marked no later than March 1, 1995 to: David Dickerson, Regional Project Manager, U.S. EPA (HRS-CAN3) Waste Mgt Division, JFK Federal Building, Boston, MA 02203, (617) 573-5735.

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